

Our nation's primary fishing-related law is up for renewal. This law, called the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), has not been reauthorized and updated for several years. The MSA plays a critical role in our efforts to strike a balance between the needs of the fishing industry and the need to maintain a sustainable and healthy ocean. Both the House and Senate have made good progress this year in drafting MSA updates, but because of the longevity and broad impacts of reauthorization, it is important to take the time needed to create and pass a good bill.

Several proposed versions of an updated MSA are currently circulating on Capitol Hill. In the Senate, S. 2012 was introduced by Senator Stevens (AK) last November and reported out of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation in December. This bill is expected to come to the Senate Floor for a vote in the near future.

In the House of Representatives, two major bills seeking to reauthorize MSA were introduced at the end of March. One bill, H.R. 5018, was introduced by Rep. Pombo (CA-11), Chairman of the House Committee on Resources. Rep. Gilchrest (MD-01), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Fisheries and Oceans, introduced the other bill, H.R. 5051. I am the lead co-sponsor on Rep. Gilchrest's bill.

In addition to these key bills, there are others that also seek to amend the current law, including 1) HR 1431- Fisheries Science and Management Enhancement Act of 2005, introduced by Rep. Rahall (WV-03), Ranking Member of the House Committee on Resources; 2) HR 4940- Fishery Management Amendments of 2006, introduced by Rep. Frank (MA-04); and 3) HR 3278- Fishing Quota Standards Act of 2005, introduced by Rep. Allen (ME-01).

Since the introduction of these bills, the House Committee on Resources has held two hearings at the full committee level, and Rep. Pombo's bill, H.R. 5018, was ultimately amended and passed out of committee in mid-May. The bill is expected to come up for a vote on the House Floor in July, though such predictions are difficult to make. If it reaches the Floor, it could face further amendments and may or may not be passed by the full body.

There is both a great need and a wide desire to complete the task this year, since a thorough review and updating of the MSA legislation is well overdue. I will be working to ensure any bill Congress produces is good policy.

For more information from me on oceans, [click here](#) .